

# Everglades National Park Strategic Plan 2001 – 2005



*Here are no lofty peaks seeking the sky, no mighty glaciers or rushing streams wearing away the uplifted land. Here is a land, tranquil in its quiet beauty, serving not as the source of water, but as the last receiver of it. To its natural abundance we owe the spectacular plant and animal life that distinguishes this place from all others in our country.*

President Harry S. Truman  
Address at the Dedication of Everglades National Park  
December 1947

**Everglades National Park  
Strategic Plan  
2001 – 2005**

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
Richard G. Ring, Superintendent

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
Jerry Belson, Regional Director  
Southeast Region

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Table of Contents

<b>Preface</b>	1
Government Performance and Results Act	1
About This Plan	2
<b>Introduction</b>	4
About The Park	4
Park Map	6
<b>Mission</b>	7
Purpose	7
Significance	7
Guiding Principles	8
Mission Goals	9
<b>Long-Term Goals Listing</b>	10
<b>Goal Explanations</b>	15
Goal Category I – Preserve Park Resources	15
Goal Category II – Visitor Experience	21
Goal Category III – Partnerships	23
Goal Category IV – Organizational Effectiveness	24
<b>Accomplishing Our Goals</b>	27
Organization	27
Financial Resources	29
Facilities	31
Crosscutting Initiatives and Partnerships	32
<b>Key External Factors</b>	36
<b>Measuring Results</b>	37
Program Evaluation Methodology	37
Schedule for Future Evaluations	37
<b>Consultation</b>	37
<b>Contributors</b>	38





## Preface

This Strategic Plan was written to fulfill the requirements of the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA). However, it is more than just a response to a legislative mandate. The law was a catalyst that caused park staff to examine the park's mission and take a fresh, longer-range view of what results or outcomes are needed to achieve to accomplish that mission. It encouraged us to think and plan in new ways. The result, we believe, will be better planning, better management, and better communication with all of our constituencies and stakeholders, as well as amongst ourselves. We will know where we are, where we need to be, and how we are going to get there in the most effective and efficient manner.

### Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA)

Congress passed GPRA to bring the federal government into the "performance management revolution." Performance management is a goal-driven management concept and practice already widely adopted by the private sector, and state and local government.

In a nutshell, performance management ensures that daily actions are guided by goal setting in pursuit of accomplishing an organization's primary mission, followed by performance measurement and evaluation. Importantly the goals are quantifiable and measurable results or outcomes rather than outputs (activities, services, and products). The established and proven performance management approach is to *establish goals – allocate resources to accomplish those goals – take action/do the work – measure results – evaluate and report performance – use evaluation to adjust goals and reallocate resources – and continue the loop*. This process sharpens our focus on accomplishing our mission in the most efficient and effective ways, and it holds managers and employees accountable on a clear and measurable basis.

GPRA requires federal agencies to develop and use three primary documents in conducting their business and to more effectively communicate with Congress and the American people:

- 1) A **Strategic Plan** of no less than five years duration, reviewed and revised every three years.
- 2) An **Annual Performance Plan** tiered off the Strategic Plan each year, showing how long-term goals will be accomplished in annual increments.
- 3) An **Annual Performance Report** reviewing each year's successes and failures and identifying areas where activities or goals need to be revised in the future. These documents are also to be submitted to the Congress and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB).

As required by GPRA, the National Park Service (NPS) developed a "servicewide" Strategic Plan in 1997. It provides the framework and direction for the entire National Park Service. Developed with public meetings and in consultation with the Office of Management and Budget, Congress and the Department of the Interior, it defines success for the National Park Service and shows servicewide direction. It builds on previous planning efforts and the contributions of many people within and outside of the NPS.

The servicewide Strategic Plan covers all the National Park Service, reflecting its total **mission**:

*The National Park Service preserves unimpaired the natural and cultural resources and values of the national park system for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of this and future generations. The Park Service cooperates with partners to extend the benefits of natural and cultural resource conservation and outdoor recreation throughout this country and the world.*

The servicewide plan includes **mission goals** that reflect our preservation mission, which has a longer and indefinite time frame for goals than anticipated by GPRA. Mission goals are for perpetuity, are not quantifiable, and are comprehensive and all-inclusive of what we do. To be able to achieve the mission goals, **long-term goals** are identified. Long-term goals are the desired resource and visitor experience conditions with measurable outcomes. They are typically defined in increments of five years, and are not all-inclusive of what we do. A copy of the NPS Strategic Plan is available for review at park headquarters. It is also available on the Internet at [www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov).

Each National Park unit takes the servicewide mission and long-term goals and breaks them down into applicable park long-term goals and annual work plans. Then they add goals specific to their own legislative mandates, missions, resources, visitor service and issues needs. The local plans are then a blend of national and local missions and goals.

## About This Plan

This Strategic Plan for Everglades National Park is a five-year plan covering fiscal years 2001-2005. It addresses three basic questions:

### *Where are we going?*

This is explained by our mission and the long-term goals that break it down into clear, understandable and achievable pieces.

### *What is the environment?*

We have examined the internal and external forces that affect our organization. We have also identified opportunities and threats that could impact our mission, and examined the gap between our goals and our ability to achieve them.



### *How do we get there?*

Goals, action plans, their schedules and the resources required to achieve them address this question. The park's Strategic Plan focuses on the highest priority issues for the next five years as identified by the Park Management Team. Therefore, this plan does not address the total spectrum of all park responsibilities, programs and actions. That comprehensive review is within the purview of the park's General Management Plan, which will be revised beginning in October 2000. Future Strategic Plans will draw from the conclusions of the revised General Management Plan.

A strategic plan documents the results of a strategic planning process through which an organization examines itself, sets priorities, establishes its vision and direction for the future and develops the resources necessary to create that future. This process requires making difficult choices in many areas, such as organizational, budgetary and human resources. Further, as a public agency, we must be aware of how these difficult choices affect our neighbors, constituencies and the general public.

The Strategic Plan outlines the goals and programs that will accomplish the park's mission. It communicates the direction of our agency and the park to the public, other agencies and employees. It consists of:

- a **mission statement** - born out of the NPS organic act as well as the specific legislation establishing this park;
- **mission goals** - that illustrate broadly what we do far beyond just five years—"in perpetuity"—to accomplish our mission; and
- **long-term goals** - which target in quantified, measurable ways what we will accomplish in the next five years toward achieving our mission goals.

The long-term goals address appropriate servicewide goals as well as park-specific goals. The goal numbering protocol follows that of the servicewide plan. Since not all servicewide goals apply to this park, some numbers are skipped. In addition, there are numbers containing 0's which are not in the servicewide plan and indicate a park-specific goal.

Following the goals, the plan contains a section on "Accomplishing Our Goals" which briefly sketches the park's organization, staffing, fiscal, infrastructure, and other resources available to achieve the plan's long-term goals. This is followed by brief discussion of "Key External Factors" over which park staff may have influence but not control, and which could positively or negatively affect goal achievement.

Finally there is a brief discussion of how the contents of the plan were determined and a list of persons who were consulted in the development of the plan.

It should be noted that the goals in this plan are generally predicated on "flat budgets" for the next five years. Where increases in appropriations were known or likely, they were taken into account. Obviously, limits on funding constrain what can be accomplished toward our goals and mission.

Each year that the Strategic Plan is in effect, beginning with fiscal year 2001 (October 2000), there will be a companion Annual Performance Plan which shows in *annual* goals that year's targeted incremental achievement of each long-term goal and a work plan for accomplishing that increment. Each year there will also be an Annual Performance Report discussing actual achievement of the prior year's annual goals and progress on long-term goals.

Additional copies of the Everglades National Park Strategic Plan are available at park headquarters. It will also be available on the Internet at <http://www.nps.gov/ever>. Questions and comments are welcome and encouraged and can be addressed to the Superintendent, Everglades National Park, 40001 State Road 9336, Homestead, Florida 33034. As they are written and approved, copies of the current year's Annual Performance Plan and Annual Performance Report will also be available on request, with questions and comments equally welcome.



# Introduction

## About the Park

Everglades National Park is one of 379 units of the National Park System administered by the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. Established in 1947, the park's original boundaries contained 460,000 acres. Subsequent increases have increased its size to 1,509,000 acres, including most of Florida Bay. The most recent addition came in 1989 when Congress added 109,506 acres in the East Everglades area of the park which included a portion of the Northeast Shark River Slough, a waterway that is critical for the protection of park resources and hydrologic restoration.

The park stretches more than sixty miles north-to-south and forty miles east-to-west. It holds the largest expanse of wilderness east of the Rocky Mountains. Congress designated 1,296,500 acres of this vast park as the Marjorie Stoneman Douglas Wilderness to honor this conservation pioneer who brought the beauty and fragility of the Everglades to public attention in her 1947 book *The Everglades, River of Grass*.

The park is located at the interface of temperate and subtropical environments and has a great diversity of resources. These include over 400 species of birds, 800 species of land and water vertebrates, 1600 species of vascular plants, 125 species of fish and 24 varieties of orchids. The park is home to 14 endangered species. Over 1 million visitors experience the park each year. Popular activities include canoeing, camping, boating, wildlife observation and fishing.



Everglades alone among our hemisphere's national parks has been named an International Biosphere Reserve, World Heritage Site and a Wetland of International Importance. These designations are a tremendous source of pride, as well as increased economic benefits from international tourism. The international community has agreed the Everglades are unique and superlative. Its grandeur is severely threatened, however, and the death of the Everglades could occur. The park is the only U.S. property formally

inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger. The loss of the Everglades would not only be a loss for all Americans, in whose care they are entrusted, but for all people who recognize that they are irreplaceable.

The Everglades are an integral part of the South Florida Ecosystem, an 11,000 square mile region extending from the Kissimmee River near Orlando to the Florida Keys. Originally a vast expanse of wetland, pineland, wilderness, mangroves, coastal islands and coral reefs, this is one of the continent's most highly populated and manipulated regions. The four national park units of South Florida protect about 2.5 million acres that embody some of the best and most complete examples of the natural and cultural history of South Florida.

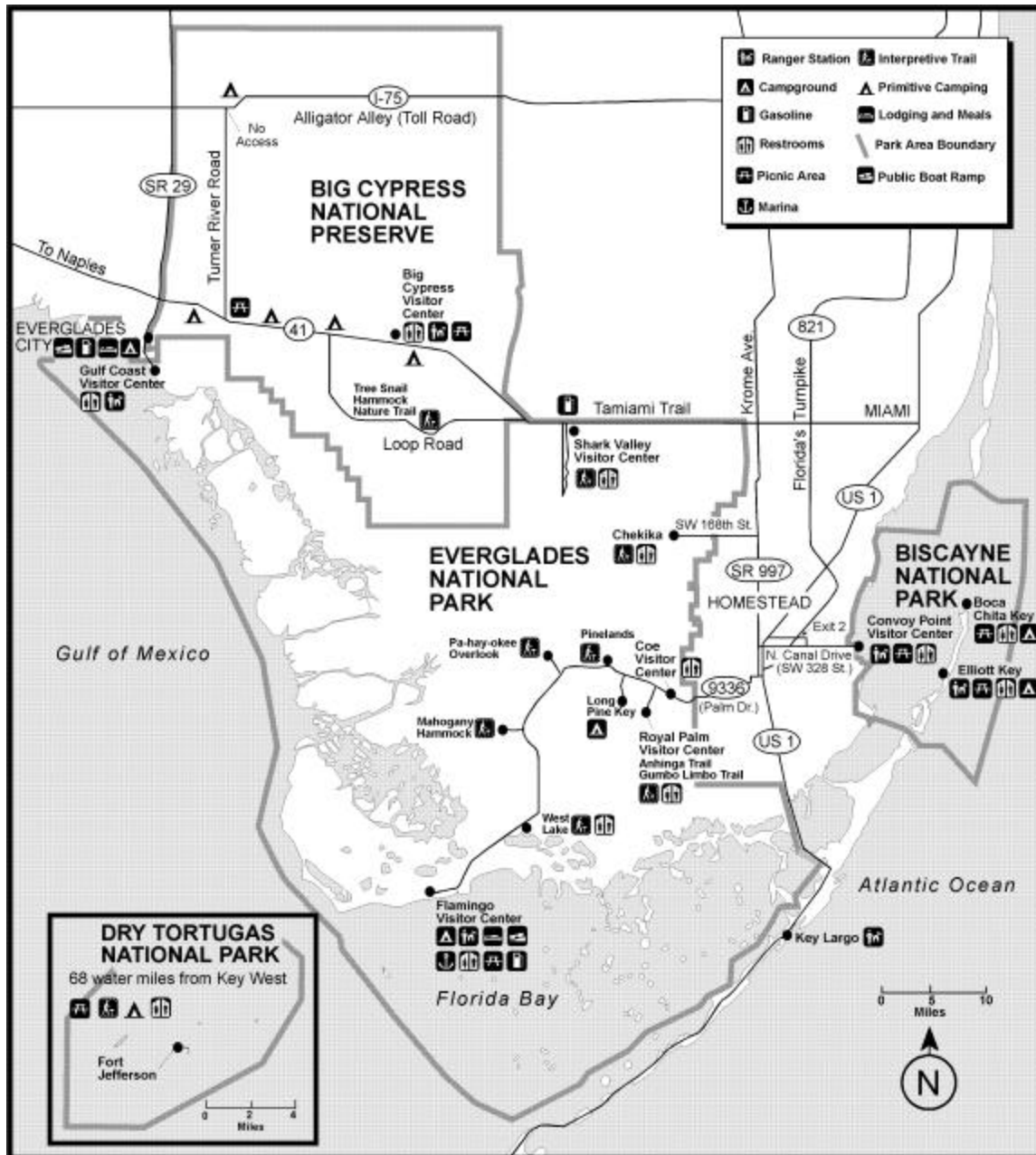
The natural systems of the four parks also sustain South Florida's quality of life and economy. They are vital to the survival of fish, wildlife and recreational areas that support the region's \$13



billion annual tourist industry. The Everglades provide and protect fresh water that enables people to live and do business in much of this area. It is the source of drinking water for 5 million people and sustains a productive agricultural industry. Today, these parks are among the most threatened in the nation due to external development and population pressures. Their survival is linked to efforts to restore portions of the larger ecosystem as well as its original functions and to lay the basis for a sustainable future for the region.



## Park Map



## **Mission**

The mission of a national park is the combination of its purpose and significance. The purpose of a park is usually defined in, or derived from, the unit's enabling legislation and from other legal documents providing for its establishment. Significance statements identify those exceptional resources and values that must be preserved to accomplish the park's purpose. Together, they define the mission of the park.

### **Purpose**

Everglades National Park is a public park for the benefit of the people. It is set aside as a permanent wilderness preserving essential primitive conditions including the natural abundance, diversity, behavior, and ecological integrity of its flora and fauna.

### **Significance**

Everglades National Park is nationally and internationally significant because it:

- Qualifies as a World Heritage Site, a Biosphere Reserve, a Wetland of International Importance, and an Outstanding Florida Water
- Supports the largest stand of protected Sawgrass prairies in North America
- Serves as a crucial water recharge area for South Florida through the Biscayne aquifer
- Provides sanctuary for 20 threatened and endangered species
- Supports the largest mangrove ecosystem in the western hemisphere
- Constitutes the largest designated wilderness in the southeast that provides foraging habitat and breeding grounds for migratory wading birds.
- Contains important cultural resources and is the homeland of the Miccosukee tribe of Indians of Florida
- Functions as a nationally significant estuarine complex in Florida Bay and the park's western coast, providing a major nursery ground that supports sport and commercial fishing
- Comprises the only subtropical reserve on the North American continent, presenting a major ecological transition zone where diverse temperate and tropical species mingle
- Functions as a major corridor and stopover for neo-tropical migrants in the south Florida ecosystem
- Encompasses resources that directly support significant economic activities
- Engenders inspiration for major literary and artistic works
- Offers a place where recreational, educational, and inspirational activities occur in a unique subtropical wilderness.

## Guiding Principles

To achieve its mission, Everglades National Park follows the guiding principles already established by the National Park Service. These principles are:

- **Excellent Service.** Providing the best possible service to park visitors and partners.
- **Productive Partnerships.** Collaborating with federal, state, tribal and local governments, private organizations, and businesses to work toward common goals.
- **Citizen Involvement.** Providing opportunities for citizens to participate in the decisions and actions of the Everglades National Park.
- **Heritage Education.** Educating park visitors and the general public about their history and common heritage.
- **Outstanding Employees.** Empowering a diverse workforce committed to excellence, integrity, and quality work.
- **Employee Development.** Providing developmental opportunities and training so employees have the “tools to do the job” safely and efficiently.
- **Wise Decisions.** Integrating social, economic, environmental, scientific and ethical considerations into the decision-making process.
- **Effective Management.** Instilling a performance management philosophy that works towards common goals fostering creativity, focusing on results, and requiring accountability at all levels.
- **Science and Research.** Applying scientific information to park management decisions to preserve park resources. Promoting parks as centers for broad scientific and scholarly inquiry to benefit society.
- **Shared Capabilities.** Sharing technical information and expertise with public and private land managers.



## **Mission Goals**

Everglades National Park's mission is accomplished through pursuit of the following "in perpetuity" mission goals. Mission Goals are essentially visions of the future. They describe the desired future conditions that would best fulfill the park purpose. They are broad descriptions expressed in terms of resource condition and visitor experience.

### ***Goal Category I: Preserve Everglades National Park Resources***

***Park Mission Goal Ia0. Hydrological conditions within Everglades National Park and the South Florida ecosystem are characteristic of the natural ecosystem prior to Euro-American intervention, including water quality, quantity, distribution and timing.***

***Park Mission Goal Ia1. Everglades National Park is restored and protected in ways that allow natural processes, functions, cycles, and biota to be reestablished and maintained in perpetuity, and that allow archeological and historical resources to be appropriately preserved.***

### ***Goal Category II: Provide for the Public Use and Enjoyment and Visitor Experience of Everglades National Park***

***Park Mission Goal IIa. Visitors to Everglades National Park have the opportunity to experience the park's unique subtropical wilderness values.***

***Park Mission Goal IIb. The public understands and appreciates Everglades National Park and its role in the South Florida ecosystem and provides support in achieving the park's purpose.***

### ***Goal Category III- Strengthen and Preserve Natural and Cultural Resources and Enhance Recreational Opportunities Managed by Partners***

***Park Mission Goal IIIa. The Seminole and Miccosukee Tribes have the opportunity to exercise their existing tribal rights within Everglades National Park to the extent and in such a manner that they do not conflict with the park purpose.***

### ***Goal Category IV- Ensure Organizational Effectiveness***

***Park Mission Goal IVa. Everglades National Park has a diverse, motivated, and professional workforce allowing it to be a responsive, efficient, safe, and accountable organization.***

## Long-term Goals Listing

This section places Everglades National Park mission goals and long-term goals in the context of NPS servicewide mission goals and long term goals. The Everglades mission and long-term goals are shown in italics.

### NPS GOAL CATEGORY I: PRESERVE PARK RESOURCES

**NPS Mission Goal Ia:** *Natural and cultural resources and associated values are protected, restored and maintained in good condition and managed within their broader ecosystem and cultural context.*

***Park Mission Goal Ia0:*** *Hydrologic conditions within Everglades National Park and the South Florida ecosystem are characteristic of the natural ecosystem prior to Euro-American intervention, including water quality, quantity, distribution and timing.*

***Park Long-term Goal Ia0 - Hydrologic Restoration:*** *By September 30, 2005, restoration of 1,300,000 acres of wetlands in the Shark River Slough, Taylor Slough and C-111 watersheds begins with the completion of all project design work to restore more natural water deliveries.*

***Park Mission Goal Ia1.*** *Everglades National Park is restored and protected in ways that allow natural processes, functions, cycles, and biota to be reestablished and maintained in perpetuity, and that allow archeological and historical resources to be appropriately preserved.*

**NPS Long-term Goal Ia1A - Disturbed Lands:** By September 30, 2005, 10.1% of targeted parklands, disturbed by development or agriculture, as of 1999 (22,500 of 222,300 acres), are restored.

***Park Long-term Goal Ia10:*** *By September 30, 2005, 109,506 acres in the East Everglades addition are protected through acquisition.*

***Park Long-term Goal Ia1A:*** *By September 30, 2005, 1220 acres in the Hole in the Donut are restored.*

**NPS Long-term Goal Ia1B: Exotic Vegetation -** By September 30, 2005, exotic vegetation on 6.3% of targeted acres of parkland (167,500 of 2,656,700 acres) is contained.

***Park Long-term Goal Ia1B:*** *By September 30, 2005, exotic vegetation on 6.3% of targeted acres of parkland is contained.*

**NPS Long-term Goal Ia2A: Threatened and Endangered Species -** By September 30, 2005, 19% of the 1999 identified park populations (84 of 442) of federally listed threatened and endangered species with critical habitat on park lands or requiring NPS recovery actions have an improved status, and an additional 18.1% (80 of 442) have stable populations.

***Park Long-term Goal Ia2A:*** *By September 30, 2005, 3 of the 14 threatened and endangered species populations in the park (including Cape Sable Seaside Sparrow, crocodile, eagle, panther, manatee & osprey) improve and 4 remain stable.*



**Park Long-term Goal la20: Native Species of Special Concern** – By September 30, 2005, populations of native plant and animal species of special concern (state-listed T&E species, endemic or indicator species, etc.) are at scientifically acceptable levels.

**NPS Long-term Goal la3 – Air Quality:** By September 30, 2005, air quality in 70% of reporting park areas has remained stable or improved.



**Park Long-term Goal la3:** By September 30, 2005, air quality in Everglades National Park has remained stable or improved.

**NPS Long-term Goal la4 – Water Quality:** By September 30, 2005, 85% of Park Units will have unimpaired water quality.

**Park Long-term Goal la4:** By September 30, 2005, phosphorus levels entering the park are 8 parts per billion (ppb) in the Shark River Slough and 6 ppb in the Taylor Slough/Coastal Water Basin.)

**NPS Long-term Goal la6 – Museum Collections:** By September 30, 2005, 73.4% of preservation and protection standards for park museum collections are met.

**Park Long-term Goal la6:** By September 30, 2005, 90 of the 120 standards for storage and protection of museum collections are met.



**NPS Long-term goal la8 – Archeological Sites:** By September 30, 2005, 59% of the FY 1999 recorded archeological sites with condition assessments are in good condition. (7470 of 14,940 sites)

**Park Long-term Goal la8:** By September 30, 2005, -0- of the 150 archeological sites in the park identified on Archeological Sites Management System (ASMIS) are in good condition, but no sites have degraded from baseline conditions due to human activity.

**NPS Mission Goal lb:** The National Park Service contributes to knowledge about natural and cultural resources and associated values; management decisions about resources and visitors are based on adequate scholarly and scientific information.

**NPS Long-term goal lb1 – Natural Resource Inventories:** By September 30, 2005, acquire or develop 87% (2,203) of the 2,537 outstanding data sets identified in 1999 of basic natural resource inventories for all parks.

**Park Long-term Goal lb1:** By September 30, 2005, 8 of the natural resource data sets related to South Florida ecosystem are acquired/developed.

## **NPS GOAL CATEGORY II: PROVIDE FOR THE PUBLIC ENJOYMENT AND VISITOR EXPERIENCE OF PARKS**

**NPS Mission Goal IIa:** Visitors safely enjoy and are satisfied with availability, accessibility, diversity, and quality of park facilities, services, and appropriate recreational opportunities.

***Park Mission Goal IIa.*** Visitors to Everglades National Park have the opportunity to experience the park's unique subtropical wilderness values.

**NPS long-term goal IIa1 – Visitor Satisfaction:** By September 30, 2005, 95 % of park visitors are satisfied with appropriate park facilities, services and recreational opportunities.

***Park Long-term Goal IIa1:*** By September 30, 2005, 95% of park visitors are satisfied with appropriate park facilities, services and recreational opportunities.

**NPS long-term goal IIa2 – Visitor Safety:** By September 30, 2005, the visitor accident/incident rate will be at or below 7.96 per 100,000 visitor days [a 16% decrease from the FY 1992 – FY 1996 baseline of 9.48 per 100,000 visitor days].

***Park Long-term Goal IIa2:*** By September 30, 2005, the rate (25.62) of visitor accidents/incidents will decrease by 10% to 23.06.

**NPS Mission Goal IIb – Visitor Understanding and Appreciation:** Park visitors and the general public understand and appreciate the preservation of parks and their resources for this and future generations.

***Park Mission Goal IIb.*** The public understands and appreciates Everglades National Park and its role in the South Florida ecosystem and provides support in achieving the park's purpose.

**NPS long-term goal IIb1:** By September 30, 2005, 86% of park visitors understand and appreciate the significance of the park they are visiting.

***Park Long-term Goal IIb1:*** By September 30, 2005, 86% of park visitors understand and appreciate the significance of Everglades National Park.

## **NPS GOAL CATEGORY III: STRENGTHEN AND PRESERVE NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES AND ENHANCE RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES MANAGED BY PARTNERS**

**NPS Mission Goal IIIa:** Natural and cultural resources are conserved through formal partnerships.

***Park Mission Goal IIIa.*** The Seminole and Miccosukee Tribes have the opportunity to exercise their existing tribal rights within Everglades National Park to the extent and in such a manner that they do not conflict with the park purpose.

**NPS Mission Goal IIIb:** Through partnerships with other federal, state, and local agencies and nonprofit organizations, a nationwide system of parks, open space, rivers, and trails provides educational, recreational, and American conservation benefits for the American people.

**NPS long-term Goal IIIb1 – Conservation Assistance:** By September 30, 2005, an additional 4,200 miles of trails, an additional 6,600 miles of protected river corridor, and an additional 223,200 acres of parks and open space, from the 1997 totals, are conserved with NPS partnership assistance.

***Park Long-term Goal IIIb1:*** By September 30, 2005, 47,651 acres are conserved in the South Florida ecosystem through acquisition by legislated partnerships.

#### **NPS GOAL CATEGORY IV: ENSURE ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS**

**NPS Mission Goal IVa:** The National Park Service uses current management practices, systems, and technologies to accomplish its mission.

***Park Mission Goal IVa:*** Everglades National Park has a diverse, motivated, and professional workforce allowing it to be a responsive, efficient, safe, and accountable organization.

**NPS Long-term goal IVa3A – Performance Plans Linked to Goals:** By September 30, 2005, 100% of employee performance plans are linked to appropriate strategic and annual performance goals and positions competencies.

***Park Long-term Goal IVa3A:*** By September 30, 2005, 242 employees' performance plans (100% of park workforce) are linked to appropriate strategic and annual performance goals and position competencies.

**NPS Long-term goal IVa4A – Underrepresented groups in permanent workforce:** By September 30, 2005, increase the servicewide representation of underrepresented groups over the 1999 baseline by 25% in the 9 targeted occupational series in the permanent workforce.

***Park Long-term Goal IVa4A:*** By September 30, 2005, 23 of 53 employees in 4 targeted series (025, 401, 1015, 1640) in the park workforce are members of underrepresented groups.

**NPS Long-term goal IVa5 – Employee Housing:** By September 30, 2005, 50% of employee housing units listed in poor or fair condition in 1997 assessments are rehabilitated to good condition, replaced or removed.

***Park Long-term Goal IVa5:*** By September 30, 2005, 20 employee housing units classified as being in poor or fair condition are removed, replaced or upgraded to good condition.

**NPS Long-term goal IVa6A – Employee Safety - Lost-time Injury Rate:** By September 30, 2005, the NPS employee lost-time injury rate will be at or below 4.49 per 200,000 labor hours worked (100 FTE).

***Park Long-term Goal IVa6A:*** By September 30, 2005, the employee lost-time injury rate will decrease 50% from the park's 1992-1996 average (6.36).

**NPS Mission Goal IVb:** The National Park Service increases its managerial resources through initiatives and support from other agencies, organizations and individuals.

**NPS Long-term goal IVb1 – Volunteer Hours:** By September 30, 2005, increase by 44.7% the number of volunteer hours [from 3.8 million hours in 1997 to 5.5 million hours].

**Park Long-term Goal IVb1:** *By September 30, 2005, the number of volunteer hours increase by 10% from 1997 totals.*

**NPS Long-term goal IVb4 - Fee Receipts:** By September 30, 2005, Receipts from park entrance, recreation, and other fees are increased by 33.1% over 1997 level [from \$121 million to \$161 million].

**Park Long-term Goal IVb4:** *By September 30, 2005, the amount of receipts from park entrance, recreation and other fees increase by 20% from 1997 totals.*



## Goal Explanations

### NPS GOAL CATEGORY I: PRESERVE PARK RESOURCES

The goals in this category are tied to the legislative mandates from the NPS Organic Act "...to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wild life therein...", as well as the 1934 act establishing Everglades National Park, and subsequent legislation such as the 1978 act designating ENP wilderness lands, and other acts which reinforce and expand the Park's mission. All NPS goals that deal with resource protection and the acquisition of knowledge from and about the Park are included in this category.

**NPS Mission Goal Ia:** Natural and cultural resources and associated values are protected, restored and maintained in good condition and managed within their broader ecosystem and cultural context.

***Park Mission Goal Ia0:*** Hydrologic conditions within Everglades National Park and the South Florida ecosystem are characteristic of the natural ecosystem prior to Euro-American intervention, including water quality, quantity, distribution and timing.

***Park Long-term Goal Ia0 - Hydrologic Restoration:*** By September 30, 2005, restoration of 1,300,000 acres of wetlands in the Shark River Slough, Taylor Slough and C-111 watersheds begins with the completion of all project design work to restore more natural water deliveries.

Everglades National Park is located at the downstream end of the greater Everglades watershed of South Florida. By the early 1960's, this natural system of interconnected lakes, wetlands, and estuaries was subdivided into a series of discrete water reservoirs as part of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Central and Southern Florida Project (C&SF Project). Natural marsh and groundwater flows were largely replaced by canal and structure flows to reduce flooding impacts in adjacent developed areas and increase urban and agricultural water supply. This project significantly impacted the natural hydrology of the park, causing more extensive flooding during wet periods, and more extensive dry-downs during droughts. This goal focuses on restoring more natural hydrologic conditions in the key watersheds of Everglades National Park. The performance target for this category is the total cumulative number of acres restored by the end of each fiscal year.

Requests by the NPS in the 1960's prompted Congress to establish the first laws guaranteeing a minimum water delivery to Everglades National Park. By the 1970's there were additional Congressional directives to develop an improved water delivery system for the park, and an experimental water delivery program was authorized in the early 1980's. With the passage of the 1989 Everglades National Park Protection and Expansion Act, Congress specifically directed the Army Corps of Engineers to modify the C&SF Project to reestablish more natural hydrologic conditions within Everglades National Park.

Today, efforts to restore water flow to the over-drained wetlands of Northeast Shark River Slough and Taylor Slough are being designed into the Corps ongoing Modified Water Deliveries and C-111 Projects. These flow improvements should begin to restore more natural water depths and hydroperiods in Everglades National Park (ENP) wetlands, as well as improved freshwater flows into the downstream estuaries. The design work for these projects is nearing completion, and several of the new water delivery features have already been constructed. Both of these water delivery projects are scheduled for completion by approximately 2006, and

the improved hydrologic conditions afforded by these projects should lead to more sustainable native vegetation and animal communities in the park.

In 1993, the Army Corps of Engineers began working on a comprehensive reevaluation of the C&SF Project, with the goal of restoring the South Florida ecosystem, while meeting the water-related needs of a growing population. The Corps Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP) was submitted to Congress in July 1999, and the initial authorization of ten key water management projects is expected in August 2000. This CERP program includes a number of additional improvements to further reestablish the hydrologic interconnections in the original South Florida ecosystem, and to more fully restore the overall productivity and biological diversity of the park's native plant and animal communities.



***Park Mission Goal 1a1.*** *Everglades National Park is restored and protected in ways that allow natural processes, functions, cycles, and biota to be reestablished and maintained in perpetuity, and that allow archeological and historical resources to be appropriately preserved.*

**NPS Long-term Goal 1a1A - Disturbed Lands:** By September 30, 2005, 10.1% of targeted parklands, disturbed by development or agriculture, as of 1999 (22,500 of 222,300 acres), are restored.

This goal focuses on improving the natural resources of ENP by restoring lands that were previously disturbed by human development activities. These disturbances within ENP are principally from two sources (1) prior agricultural activities, frequently with subsequent invasion of non-native plant species, and (2) by the physical drainage of park lands as a result of water management activities designed to benefit adjacent developed areas. The performance target for this category is the total cumulative number of acres restored by the end of each fiscal year.

***Park Long-term Goal 1a10:*** *By September 30, 2005, 109,506 acres in the East Everglades addition are protected through acquisition.*

A major disturbed lands project in the second category is the acquisition and restoration of flows in the East Everglades, an over-drained wetland area that was the primary source of surface water inflows to ENP, but was excluded from the park in the initial authorization. The NPS has been pressing for the restoration of flows to these wetlands since the 1960's. In 1989 Congress passed the Everglades National Park Protection and Expansion Act, adding 109,506 acres of these critical wetlands to the park. This East Everglades addition is a key component to restoring more natural flows to the Shark River Slough watershed, which is the principal flow - way within the park.

Since 1992, Congress has been providing land acquisition funding to complete this critical project, and each year the NPS continues to move forward on acquiring and protecting the remaining privately owned lands in the East Everglades addition area. To date, just over 77,300 acres have been acquired, with an additional 12,400 acres presently in the condemnation or declaration of taking process. All of these lands should be acquired by mid-2001, which is a first step in reestablishing more natural water flows into the eastern side of Shark River Slough.



**Park Long-term Goal Ia1A:** *By September 30, 2005, 1220 acres in the Hole in the Donut are restored.*



A major disturbed lands project in the first category is the Hole-in-the Donut Project, which involves the removal of Brazilian Pepper (an exotic tree) that has invaded approximately 6,250 acres of formerly farmed wetlands and forested uplands in an agricultural in-holding within the park. Prior agricultural practices in this area involved rock-plowing, which employs large disks that break up the underlying limestone bedrock to create a rough soil matrix where there was virtually no soil. Once the substrate is this severely damaged, exotic plant species out compete the

native vegetation, and restoration requires the removal and disposal of the exotic plant material as well as the underlying disturbed soil substrate. The remaining land is then scraped down to near bedrock, to eliminate the soil material as a site for future exotic plant invasions, while lowering the ground surface elevation to promote wetland plant development.

**NPS Long-term Goal Ia1B: Exotic Vegetation** - By September 30, 2005, exotic vegetation on 6.3% of targeted acres of parkland (167,500 of 2,656,700 acres) is contained.

**Park Long-term Goal Ia1B:** *By September 30, 2005, exotic vegetation on 6.3% of targeted acres of parkland is contained.*

This goal focuses on first containing, then eliminating the spread of invasive exotic vegetation species. In this context, exotic vegetation is defined as any invasive non-native plant species that pose a threat to native plant communities and their natural processes. Activities in this category must effectively treat the exotics, without significantly disturbing park resources. The performance target for this category is the total cumulative number of acres restored by the end of each fiscal year.

Within Everglades National Park, more than 220,000 acres of native habitat have been severely altered by the invasion of exotic vegetation species. ENP staff have been actively removing exotic vegetation species since the 1960's. Exotic plant invasions not only displace native plant communities, but also lead to a loss of critical habitat for a number of federally listed threatened and endangered species. Examples include loss of nesting and foraging habitat for the endangered Snail Kite and the Cape Sable Seaside Sparrow. In these cases, recovery plans for these species specifically call for controlling exotic plants as a way of protecting their designated critical habitat.



Brazilian Pepper

The park currently maintains a large-scale exotic plant removal and treatment program throughout the highly infested East Everglades addition (using annual contract crews), and a smaller program in each of the five management districts (using NPS staff). The staff of the Visitor and Resource Protection and South Florida Natural Resources Center have been working together to eliminate localized exotic plant species in these key areas, and at high visitor use areas throughout the Park, for more that three decades.

**NPS Long-term Goal Ia2A: Threatened and Endangered Species** - By September 30, 2005, 19% of the 1999 identified park populations (84 of 442) of federally listed threatened and endangered species with critical habitat on park lands or requiring NPS recovery actions have an improved status, and an additional 18.1% (80 of 442) have stable populations.

**Park Long-term Goal Ia2A:** *By September 30, 2005, 3 of the 14 threatened and endangered species populations in the park (including Cape Sable Seaside Sparrow, crocodile, eagle, panther, manatee & osprey) improve and 4 remain stable.*

The South Florida ecosystem is home to 68 federally listed threatened and endangered species, which exemplifies the severity of the impacts of adjacent development and construction of the C&SF Project. This goal specifically tracks the status and stability of the 14 federally listed endangered species and the 6 listed threatened species (T&E species) found within ENP. Actions under this goal must be tracked for all T&E species that have official recovery plans requiring NPS actions, or have designated critical habitat within Everglades National Park. In



general, recovery plans are prepared for all federally listed threatened and endangered species by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS). These plans contain a series of prioritized actions which should successfully lead to the recovery of a species. Designated critical habitat is defined as those essential habitat elements that have been delineated by the FWS as necessary for the long-term preservation of a listed species. The performance measure for this category is the number of federally listed threatened and endangered species in an improving, stable, declining, unknown, and extirpated status by the end of each fiscal year.

At least 23 federally listed threatened and endangered species have been observed in Everglades National Park, but a smaller number are believed to represent routine breeding populations in the park. Approximately 13 of these T&E species have had some level of baseline population status and trend assessments completed, with population estimates beginning in at least 1997. The park is designated critical habitat for just 3 of these species (American Crocodile, Everglades Snail Kite, and Cape Sable Seaside Sparrow). Recovery plans have been completed for all 20 of the park's federally listed T&E species, and NPS staff are working with the FWS on priority recovery actions, as part of the South Florida Multi-Species Recovery Plan.

As of mid-2000, approximately 2-3 of the federally listed T&E species in the Park are believed to have increasing population trends (American Crocodile, Southern Bald Eagle, and Cape Sable Seaside Sparrow). In contrast, approximately 6-7 of the federally listed T&E species (Wood Stork, Everglades Snail Kite, West Indian Manatee, Florida Panther, Garber's Spurge, Stock Island Tree Snail, and American Alligator) have populations that are thought to be stable. Only one endangered species (Red-Cockaded Woodpecker) is believed to have been locally extirpated from the Park.

**Park Long-term Goal Ia20: Native Species of Special Concern** – *By September 30, 2005, populations of native plant and animal species of special concern (state-listed T&E species, endemic or indicator species, etc.) are at scientifically acceptable levels.*

Everglades National Park contains over 800 species of vertebrates, over 300 species of birds, and over 1,600 species of vascular plants. A large number of these species are of tropical origins and occur nowhere else in the continental United States. NPS scientists and visiting cooperators have identified native species (plant and animals) that appear to have important roles in the south Florida ecosystem. This new goal focuses on native species of special concern that will be used to track the health of the park and our progress toward ecosystem restoration. Groups currently being monitored include: freshwater fish and aquatic invertebrates; wading birds (individual species and groups); Florida Bay seagrass and benthic habitats; freshwater marsh and tree island vegetation communities

**NPS Long-term Goal Ia3 – Air Quality:** By September 30, 2005, air quality in 70% of reporting park areas has remained stable or improved.

***Park Long-term Goal Ia3:*** By September 30, 2005, air quality in Everglades National Park has remained stable or improved.

Everglades National Park is a designated Class I airshed under the Clean Air Act. The park is adjacent to active farming areas within southern Miami-Dade County, and in close proximity to Miami, a large metropolitan area. Baseline air quality data is collected within the park for visibility, ozone, fine particulates, acidic precipitation (sulfates and nitrates), and heavy metals as part of the National Atmospheric Deposition Program (NADP), and by researchers with the University of California, the U.S. Geological Survey, and the South Florida Water Management District.

The NPS Air Resources Division, the NADP, and the above research programs generally provide annual reports to the park. This information will be used to measure progress against the service-wide goals.

**NPS Long-term Goal Ia4 – Water Quality:** By September 30, 2005, 85% of Park Units will have unimpaired water quality.

***Park Long-term Goal Ia4:*** By September 30, 2005, phosphorus levels entering the park are 8 parts per billion (ppb) in the Shark River Slough and 6 ppb in the Taylor Slough/Coastal Water Basin.)

In 1979, Everglades National Park was designated as an Outstanding Florida Water (OFW), which protects the park from further degradation below a 1978-1979 baseline. In spite of this, the inflow waters to the park have continued to be degraded by upstream agricultural and residential development. In addition, the park's outdated wastewater treatment systems threaten the quality of adjacent surface water and groundwater.

Water Quality monitoring of all park inflows has been underway since the 1970's. In 1988, the federal government sued the State of Florida for water quality violations related to degraded water quality at ENP inflow points. In 1992, a federal consent decree was signed, and in 1994 a massive water quality protection program was initiated by the state. More than \$750 million will be spend to reach new, more stringent, water quality standards for upstream agricultural areas.

Additional water quality treatment systems are being designed into the Modified Water Deliveries and C-111 Projects, as well as the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan to address water quality concerns. The specific numeric criteria listed above were developed as a result of the federal consent decree and represent non-degradation standards following our

OFW designation. In addition, NPS funding is being provided over the next ten years to replace and upgrade the park's wastewater infrastructure. The park's maintenance staff and scientists will continue to monitor the groundwater and surface water at our internal sites, as well as all of the inflow points. We hope to achieve our long-term goals once all of this new technology begins to come on-line.

**NPS Long-term Goal Ia6 – Museum Collections:** By September 30, 2005, 73.4% of preservation and protection standards for park museum collections are met.

***Park Long-term Goal Ia6:*** By September 30, 2005, 90 of the 120 standards for storage and protection of museum collections are met.

This goal increases the number of applicable checklist standards met for the preservation and protection of the Everglades Regional Collection Center (ERCC). The ERCC maintains rapidly growing natural history and cultural collections for Everglades, Dry Tortugas and Biscayne National Parks, and the Big Cypress National Preserve. While the overall condition of the collection is considered good, museum objects have not all been preserved, cataloged, and made available for appropriate use according to NPS standards.

**NPS Long-term goal Ia8 – Archeological Sites:** By September 30, 2005, 59% of the FY 1999 recorded archeological sites with condition assessments are in good condition. (7470 of 14,940 sites)

***Park Long-term Goal Ia8:*** By September 30, 2005, -0- of the 150 archeological sites in the park identified on Archeological Sites Management System (ASMIS) are in good condition, but no sites have degraded from baseline conditions due to human activity.



All effort spent in monitoring, evaluating, preserving and protecting the recorded archeological sites in the park, and all effort spent in investigating or mitigating any impacts that affect archeological sites are to be reported to this goal. A site in "good condition" is stable and not deteriorating due to natural processes, such as erosion, or due to human impacts, such as vandalism. This goal is measured by comparing the total number of archeological sites identified in good condition in the ASMIS to the number of sites recorded having good condition information.

**NPS Mission Goal Ib:** The National Park Service contributes to knowledge about natural and cultural resources and associated values; management decisions about resources and visitors are based on adequate scholarly and scientific information.

Everglades National Park has fundamental information needs for making decisions about managing natural and cultural resources within the park ecosystem. Everglades also contributes to scholarly and scientific research. To meet this goal, Everglades must routinely use scholarly and scientific research and consultation with park-associated communities. Goals that research park resources, either in the field or through documentary resources, and goals that link research data to decision making are supported by this mission goal.

**NPS Long-term goal Ib1 – Natural Resource Inventories:** By September 30, 2005, acquire or develop 87% (2,203) of the 2,537 outstanding data sets identified in 1999 of basic natural resource inventories for all parks.

***Park Long-term Goal Ib1:*** By September 30, 2005, 8 of the natural resource data sets related to South Florida ecosystem are acquired/developed.

This goal reports the number of number of natural resource data sets related to the South Florida ecosystem that are acquired or developed.

## **NPS GOAL CATEGORY II: PROVIDE FOR THE PUBLIC USE AND ENJOYMENT AND VISITOR EXPERIENCE OF PARKS**

The mission goals and long-term goals in goal category II are inclusive of the mandate in the NPS Organic Act—"to provide for the enjoyment of the [resources] in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations." Subsequent legislation reinforced and expanded this authority. All NPS goals for visitor satisfaction, enjoyment, safety, appreciation, and understanding are appropriate to this category.

**NPS Mission Goal IIa:** Visitors safely enjoy and are satisfied with availability, accessibility, diversity, and quality of park facilities, services, and appropriate recreational opportunities.

***Park Mission Goal IIa.*** *Visitors to Everglades National Park have the opportunity to experience the park's unique subtropical wilderness values.*

**NPS long-term goal IIa1 – Visitor Satisfaction:** By September 30, 2005, 95 % of park visitors are satisfied with appropriate park facilities, services and recreational opportunities.

***Park Long-term Goal IIa1:*** *By September 30, 2005, 95% of park visitors are satisfied with appropriate park facilities, services and recreational opportunities.*



Enjoyment of the park and its resources is a fundamental part of the visitor experience. Visitor satisfaction is affected by the quality of park programs, facilities, and services, whether provided by the National Park Service, a concessioner, or permittee. All efforts directed towards the preservation, protection, restoration, operation, maintenance of the park's resources, facilities and visitor services are to be reported in this goal.

This goal also focuses on improving and maintaining the park's recreational opportunities. Recreational opportunities in the park range from leisurely sightseeing to strenuous, 9-day,



canoe trips in the wilderness. As visitation increases and the popularity of water-based recreation (such as sea kayaking and sport fishing) rises, opportunities to experience the wilderness values (such as solitude) are reduced. Backcountry sites are often “sold out” during winter months. In addition, many park facilities do not have the capacity to meet today’s visitation. Increasing the size of facilities is typically not an option as it is in direct conflict with resource protection objectives. Some facilities, such as the Shark Valley area visitor parking lot, are no longer able to meet the needs of winter visitors. However, instead of addressing this problem through new construction, the park is seeking innovative and reasonable alternatives for managing visitation in such a manner that will ensure both visitor satisfaction and preservation.

**NPS long-term goal IIa2 – Visitor Safety:** By September 30, 2005, the visitor accident/incident rate will be at or below 7.96 per 100,000 visitor days [a 16% decrease from the FY 1992 – FY 1996 baseline of 9.48 per 100,000 visitor days]

***Park Long-term Goal IIa2:*** By September 30, 2005, the rate (25.62) of visitor accidents/incidents will decrease by 10% to 23.06.

All effort spent to help ensure the safety and security of park visitors is included in this goal. Specific examples include: 1) preserving, protecting, restoring, operating, maintaining, monitoring, or evaluating park facilities for the protection of visitors; 2) providing services that directly contribute to the safety and security of visitors (such as law enforcement and protection, search and rescue, and criminal investigations); and 3) identifying, investigating, and correcting or mitigating sources of injury and property damage experienced by visitors.

**NPS Mission Goal IIb – Visitor Understanding and Appreciation:** Park visitors and the general public understand and appreciate the preservation of parks and their resources for this and future generations.

Visitors’ experiences grow from enjoying the park and its resources to understanding why the park exists and the significance of its resources. Increased understanding of the park resources, processes and issues breeds increased desire to preserve and protect the resources and processes. Satisfactory visitor experiences build public support for preserving this country’s heritage as contained in the parks.

***Park Mission Goal IIb.*** The public understands and appreciates Everglades National Park and its role in the South Florida ecosystem and provides support in achieving the park’s purpose.

**NPS long-term goal IIb1:** By September 30, 2005, 86% of park visitors understand and appreciate the significance of the park they are visiting.

***Park Long-term Goal IIb1:*** By September 30, 2005, 86% of park visitors understand and appreciate the significance of Everglades National Park

All effort spent in providing information and orientation, interpretation, and educational services is to be reported to this goal. These services include visitor center interpretive operations, walks and talks, guided boat or tram tours, educational programs, exhibits, films, videos, and printed materials.

This goal addresses the core job of Interpretation, which is to provide visitors with an understanding and appreciation of the significance of Everglades National Park’s resources and



their roles in the ecosystem, history and the world. Interpretation is a NPS tool that fosters public awareness and appreciation of the natural and historical features of the parks, promotes an understanding of ecological concepts and relevance of historical knowledge, and instills a sense of stewardship towards the National Park System, the Earth, and all of its inhabitants.

Interpretation is a form of resource protection and management. One underlying goal of Interpretation is to educate visitors to reduce resource damage. Another role and goal of Interpretation is to actively develop a constituency that supports and understands the value of preservation and conservation. The future of Everglades National Park is dependent upon an informed and involved public, as well as responsible resource management.



To meet this goal, educational opportunities are provided year-round by NPS and concessions staff, although the level of NPS programming has been significantly reduced due to personnel reductions. Personal connections provided by traditional ranger-led programs are still valuable and foster life-long benefits. However, in light of

budget restraints, emphasis is shifting towards non-personal interpretive services and media such as television, exhibits, waysides or publications that have the ability to serve much greater audiences. In addition, the park is actively working to reach more diverse audiences in such a manner that is inclusive and meets the modern, changing needs of park visitors and neighbors.

### **NPS GOAL CATEGORY III: STRENGTHEN AND PRESERVE NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES AND ENHANCE RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES MANAGED BY PARTNERS**

This goal category relates to resources that partners – not the National Park Service- manage. The legislated formal partnerships in historic preservation, nationally significant natural resources, recreation and conservation help fulfill the NPS mission.

**NPS Mission Goal IIIa:** Natural and cultural resources are conserved through formal partnerships.

***Park Mission Goal IIIa.*** The Seminole and Miccosukee Tribes have the opportunity to exercise their existing tribal rights within Everglades National Park to the extent and in such a manner that they do not conflict with the park purpose.

Results of efforts to resolve issues of mutual interest between the park and the Seminole and Miccosukee Tribes through cooperative and coordinated working relationships relate to this goal. The park maintains a cooperative working relationship with the Miccosukee Tribe in areas of mutual assistance and interest, including environmental education, law enforcement, emergency response and structural and wildfire training.

**NPS Mission Goal IIIb:** Through partnerships with other federal, state, and local agencies and nonprofit organizations, a nationwide system of parks, open space, rivers, and trails provides educational, recreational, and American conservation benefits for the American people.

**NPS long-term Goal IIIb1 – Conservation Assistance:** By September 30, 2005, an additional 4,200 miles of trails, an additional 6,600 miles of protected river corridor, and an additional 223,200 acres of parks and open space, from the 1997 totals, are conserved with NPS partnership assistance.

***Park Long-term Goal IIIb1:*** *By September 30, 2005, 47,651 acres are conserved in the South Florida ecosystem through acquisition by legislated partnerships.*

This goal tracks the results of NPS assistance for land acquisition provided through the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force and Working Group, a formal partnership with other federal, state, and local governments, as well as the Seminole and Miccosukee Indian Tribes.

The Task Force and Working Group coordinate and develop consistent policies, strategies, plans, programs and priorities for restoring the South Florida ecosystem. A major goal of the Task Force is to maximize the spatial extent of wetlands and other habitats by acquiring land needed for restoration purposes.

#### **NPS GOAL CATEGORY IV: ENSURE ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS**

Category IV goals support the NPS mission by improving its organizational effectiveness. These goals measure workplace standards such as diversity and competency levels, as well as program execution efficiencies, such as the accuracy of construction cost estimates.

**NPS Mission Goal IVa:** The National Park Service uses current management practices, systems, and technologies to accomplish its mission.

***Park Mission Goal IVa:*** *Everglades National Park has a diverse, motivated, and professional workforce allowing it to be a responsive, efficient, safe, and accountable organization.*

**NPS Long-term goal IVa3A – Performance Plans Linked to Goals:** By September 30, 2005, 100% of employee performance plans are linked to appropriate strategic and annual performance goals and positions competencies.

***Park Long-term Goal IVa3A:*** *By September 30, 2005, 242 employees' performance plans (100% of park workforce) are linked to appropriate strategic and annual performance goals and position competencies.*

This goal directly connects individual performance to organizational outcomes by linking performance agreements with annual performance goals. Performance agreements and standards are tied to the essential competencies required for individual employees to meet goals effectively and efficiently.



**NPS Long-term goal IVa4A – Underrepresented groups in permanent workforce:** By September 30, 2005, increase the servicewide representation of underrepresented groups over the 1999 baseline by 25% in the 9 targeted occupational series in the permanent workforce.

**Park Long-term Goal IVa4A:** *By September 30, 2005, 23 of 53 employees in 4 targeted series (025, 401, 1015, 1640) in the park workforce are members of underrepresented groups.*

Everglades National Park will recruit, hire, develop, promote and retain a qualified, highly skilled, and dedicated workforce that reflects the rich diversity of our national parks and nation.

**NPS Long-term goal IVa5 – Employee Housing:** By September 30, 2005, 50% of employee housing units listed in poor or fair condition in 1997 assessments are rehabilitated to good condition, replaced or removed.

**Park Long-term Goal IVa5:** *By September 30, 2005, 20 employee housing units classified as being in poor or fair condition are removed, replaced or upgraded to good condition.*

This goal improves the condition of park housing. The National Park Service has historically provided employee housing in remote locations or other places where it is beneficial to the government. Limited park housing is provided so that the park's resources and visitors are better protected.

**NPS Long-term goal IVa6A – Employee Safety - Lost-time Injury Rate:** By September 30, 2005, the NPS employee lost time injury rate will be at or below 4.49 per 200,000 labor hours worked (100 FTE).

**Park Long-term Goal IVa6A:** *By September 30, 2005, the employee lost-time injury rate will decrease 50% from the park's 1992-1996 average (6.36).*

All effort expended to assure a safe workplace and to ensure that safe work practices are articulated and followed are to be reported to this goal. The NPS has the worst safety record in the Department of the Interior and one of the worst in the Federal Government. Unsafe work practices account for approximately 90% of NPS employee accidents. Results of this goal will reduce the employee lost-time injury rate.

**NPS Mission Goal IVb:** The National Park Service increases its managerial resources through initiatives and support from other agencies, organizations and individuals.

**NPS Long-term goal IVb1 – Volunteer Hours:** By September 30, 2005, increase by 44.7% the number of volunteer hours [from 3.8 million hours in 1997 to 5.5 million hours].

**Park Long-term Goal IVb1:** *By September 30, 2005, the number of volunteer hours increase by 10% from 1997 totals.*

This goal reports the total number of hours contributed to the park's volunteer program. Park volunteers provide diverse kinds of assistance from maintenance and interpretation to research and collection management. The National Park Service Volunteers in the Parks (VIP) program, authorized in 1970, permits the NPS to accept and use voluntary help in ways mutually beneficial to the parks and the volunteers.

**NPS Long-term goal IVb4 - Fee Receipts:** By September 30, 2005, receipts from park entrance, recreation, and other fees are increased by 33.1% over 1997 level [from \$121 million to \$ 161 million].

***Park Long-term Goal IVb4:*** *By September 30, 2005, the amount of receipts from park entrance, recreation and other fees increase by 20% from 1997 totals.*

This goal reports the amount of receipts from all fee sources.

## Accomplishing Our Goals

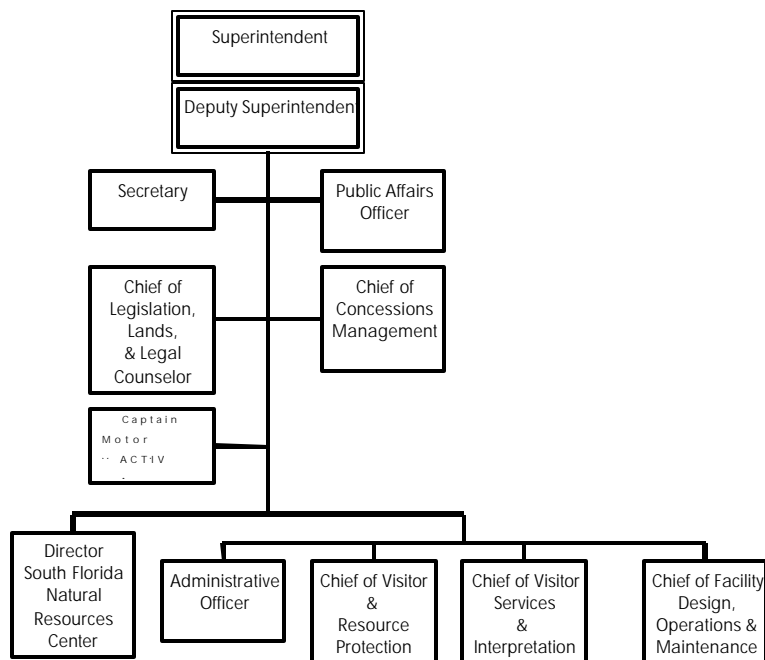
Everglades National Park's long-term goals will be accomplished in five annual increments detailed each year in an Annual Performance Plan. The Annual Performance Plan will contain annual goal increments of the long-term goals. It will also contain detailed work plans, which lay out the activities and products, along with their personnel and fiscal costs that will be carried out to achieve the park's goals.

### Organization

The park is led by a Superintendent and a Deputy Superintendent. The staff is organized into five operating divisions: The South Florida Natural Resources Center; Administration; Visitor and Resource Protection; Visitor Services and Interpretation; Facility Design, Operations and Maintenance. Other key programs include Public Affairs, Concessions Management, Legal and Legislative Affairs, Ecosystem Planning and Compliance, and Safety.

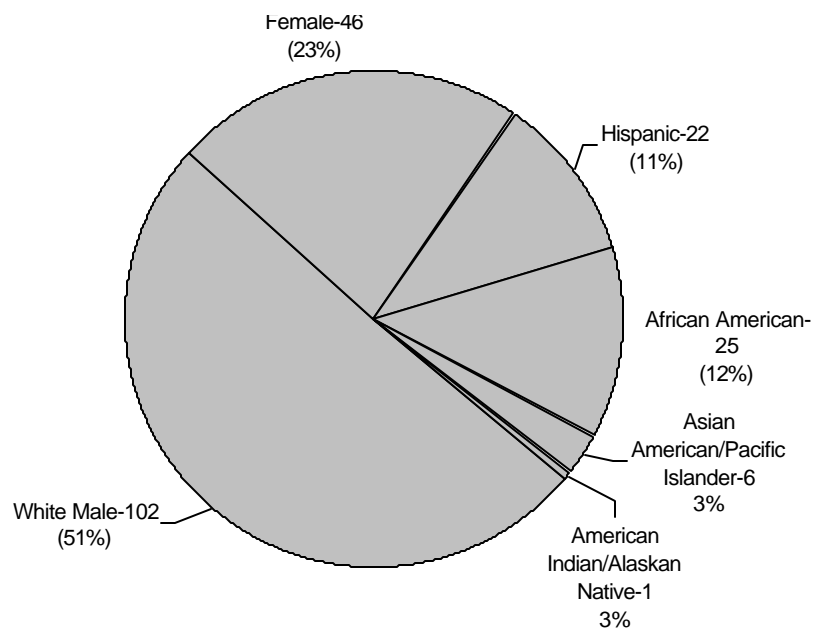
The park's work force consists of approximately 260 permanent, term, and seasonal positions. This work force will be supplemented by approximately 17,430 hours of service from Volunteers-in-the -Parks, and numerous research cooperators.

### Park Organization

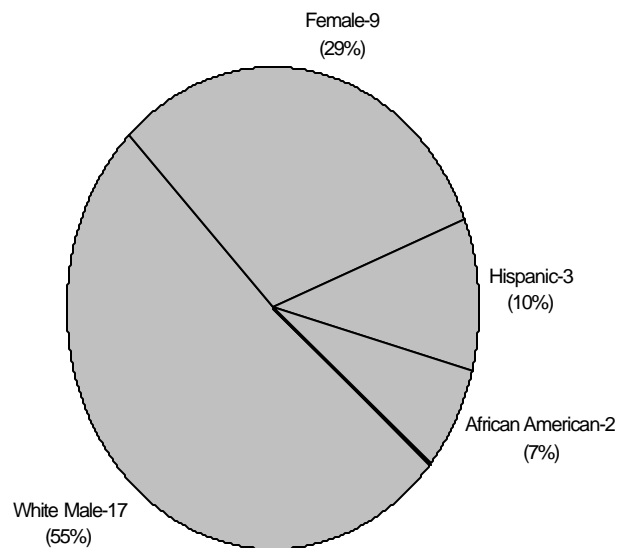


### Workforce Diversity

## Permanent Employees



## Non-Permanent Employees



## Additional Support



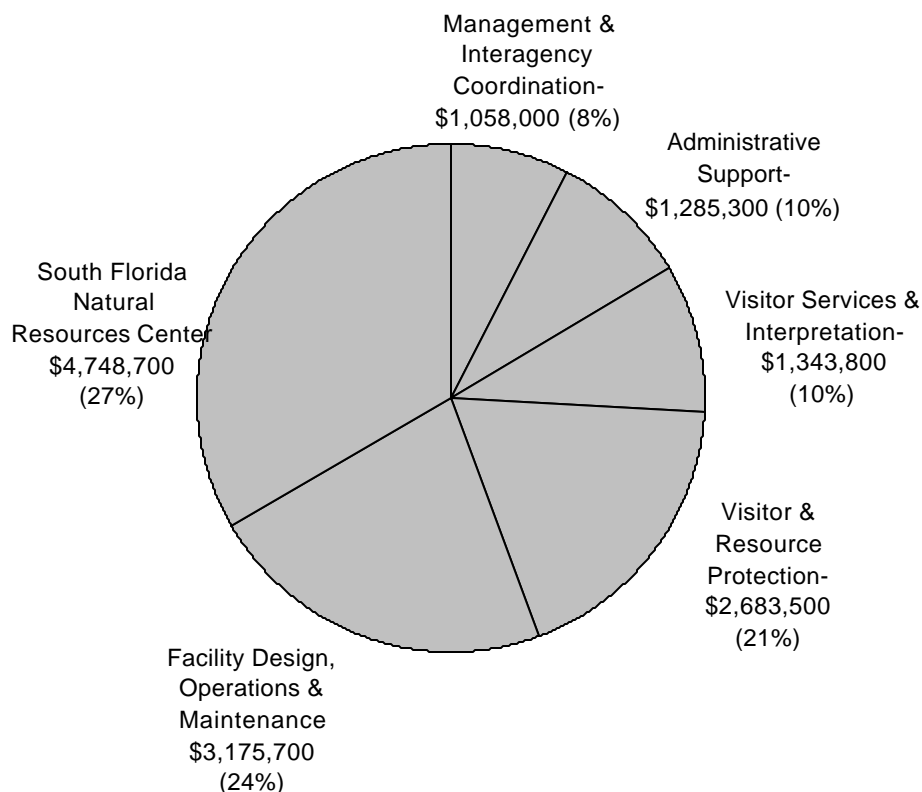
Additional specific assistance in achieving the park's goals will be provided by the National Park Service's Southeast Regional Support Offices in Atlanta, the Harper's Ferry Center, and the Denver Service Center. A new Cooperative Education Study Unit (currently in development) will also provide additional vital assistance through cooperative agreement services.

The Florida National Parks and Monuments Association, the park's nonprofit cooperating association, will continue to provide interpretive and educational materials to the public through the operation of three sales outlets in visitor centers throughout the park.

## Financial Resources

Fiscal resources available to achieve the park's goals and carry out its mission include an annual base operating budget of approximately \$14.2 million in FY2001. This amount includes an \$800,000 base increase provided specifically to enhance the NPS South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Implementation Program. This increase builds on an increase of \$250,000 received in FY2000 for the same purpose. The park's annual base operating budget (ONPS) is supplemented each year with donated funds or equipment, and funds generated through fee demonstration project fees, reimbursables, concessions franchise fees, incidental business permits, grants, etc. In addition, each year we anticipate receiving approximately \$900,000 in repair and rehabilitation and cyclic maintenance funds, and \$120,000 in equipment replacement funds. Since 1997 we have requested 12 to 20 million dollars annually for the Critical Ecosystem Studies Initiative and to support the Modified Water Deliveries Project and the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan. However, the annual amounts appropriated towards these efforts are significantly less. The ONPS budget is primarily used to support day-to-day park operations and maintain the park's goals. All other funding sources will be used to attain or improve performance targets.

### Operating Budget Base Allocations - 14,295,700



## Budget Highlights

### Resource Preservation and Management:.....\$6,090,450

Everglades National Park actively manages diverse biological, hydrological and cultural resources to maintain, rehabilitate and perpetuate their inherent integrity.

Specific programs include:

- ♦ Tracking and management of specific ecosystem restoration projects, such as the Modified Water Deliveries and C-111 projects.
- ♦ Scientific research to provide accurate information to guide management decisions related to ecosystem restoration.
- ♦ Inventory and monitoring to describe the marine, wildlife, aquatic, vegetation and archeological resources under NPS stewardship and monitor their condition to detect or predict changes.
- ♦ Long-term efforts to remove invasive, exotic plants such as melaleuca and Brazilian pepper.
- ♦ Efforts to stabilize or increase populations of threatened or endangered species, such as the Cape Sable Seaside Sparrow, American Crocodile and the Florida Panther.
- ♦ Fire management to maintain viable habitats and suppress damaging fires.
- ♦ Resource protection (law enforcement) efforts to protect resources from damage, loss, injury or mortality as a result of visitor activities.
- ♦ Compliance issues, including establishment of an oversight team for South Florida restoration projects.
- ♦ Park Planning to prepare new General Management Plans for Everglades and Dry Tortugas National Parks

### Visitor Services: .....\$2,685,550

The National Park Service offers a variety of visitor services that allow the public diverse opportunities to experience and learn about the unique resources of Everglades National Park.

Specific programs include:

- ♦ Operation and maintenance of visitor centers, campgrounds, environmental education centers, nature trails, canoe trails and wilderness campsites.
- ♦ Ranger-led activities, such as talks, walks, canoe and bicycling trips, and campfire programs which promote an understanding of the park's significance.
- ♦ Curriculum-based, environmental education program, now in its 29<sup>th</sup> year, which has introduced over 250,000 students to the Everglades.
- ♦ Management of activities related to concessions which provide lodging, food service and tours.
- ♦ Visitor protection activities providing for the protection, safety and security of park visitors, employees, concessioners, and public and private property.

### Facility Operations and Maintenance: .....\$3,175,700

- ♦ Operation and maintenance of facilities for visitor use, such as the visitor centers, campgrounds, and roads and trails. \$825,300 in estimated fee revenues will be used to rehabilitate and upgrade visitor facilities, including boardwalk trails, boat/canoe launches, backcountry campsites, and replacement of wayside exhibits.
- ♦ Operation and maintenance of facilities that support the park's administrative and operational needs, including administrative and district offices, maintenance and utility buildings, research facilities and employee housing.

Park Administration: .....\$2,343,300

This program area includes management staff and the administrative support functions for the park, such as budget, contracting and procurement, property management, and human resources.

Total: .....\$14,295,000

## Facilities

Since the establishment of Everglades National Park, the development of visitor facilities has progressed according to a concept of preserving the park's wilderness qualities and keeping developmental encroachments to a minimum. This concept is consistently reflected in the park's legislation, planning and management. Developed areas reflect, and are limited to, patterns already existing in 1943.

The original footprint of park development was established in the 1950's and early 1960's and was complete by 1964. As a result of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other environmental legislation enacted in the early 1970's, there has been greater regulation of resource impacts from park construction. While park facilities have been periodically upgraded to meet changing standards and codes, there has been a consistent focus on minimizing development. Sensitive planning, design and construction ensure park facilities are appropriate, sustainable and of the highest quality. Today, the developed areas remain basically unchanged from the 1960's, occupying less than 0.1% of the 1.4 million acres contained within the original park boundary.



### Current Development and Facilities

- 82 miles of surfaced roads
- 156 miles of trails (including canoe trails)
- 5 miles of surfaced trails
- 2 miles of elevated boardwalk trails:
  - Anhinga Trail, Pa-hay-okee Overlook, Mahogany Hammock, West Lake, Eco Pond, Shark Valley
- educational signs and exhibits
- 3 campgrounds:
  - Flamingo, 295 sites
  - Long Pine Key, 108 sites
  - Chekika, 20 sites
- 48 designated backcountry campsites
- 3 fee collection stations:
  - Main Entrance, Chekika, and Shark Valley

- 301 buildings:
  - 5 visitor centers
  - headquarters, maintenance and utility buildings
  - 2 research facilities
  - 2 environmental education camps
  - housing for park and concession employees
- 3 concessioners:
  - Flamingo Lodge, Marina, and Outpost Resort  
motel and housekeeping cottages; restaurant; gift shop; marina and store; rental boats, houseboats, and canoes; sight-seeing boat tours.
  - Shark Valley Tram Tours  
sight-seeing tram tours, rental bicycles, snacks.
  - Everglades National Park Boat Tours  
sight-seeing boat tours, rental canoes, gift shop, snacks.

### **Crosscutting Initiatives and Partnerships**

Everglades National Park is involved in several crosscutting initiatives and partnerships with other bureaus in the Department of the Interior and other federal and state agencies to achieve the goals and fulfill the mission of the park. Ecosystems do not stop at political boundaries; their mutually shared values and influences are felt in a wider context. Everglades National Park has actively responded to its broader role by active community involvement and fully exploring its ecosystem interests in the South Florida and Caribbean contexts, and through support of Presidential initiatives in Brazil and U.S. Treaty commitments globally.

#### South Florida Ecosystem Restoration

The National Park Service plays a vital role in efforts to restore the South Florida ecosystem, an 11,000 square mile region extending from the Kissimmee River near Orlando, to the Florida Keys. The NPS actively participates as members of the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Working Group and other restoration groups. NPS staff are involved in establishing goals for ecosystem restoration, evaluating the design and implementation of restoration projects, conducting scientific research, and monitoring field conditions to measure progress. Through ongoing interpretive and outreach programs, the South Florida parks are also committed to educating the public about the need for restoring the ecosystem. Specific activities include:

- Participation in work groups and committees that focus on implementation of construction projects whose goals are to improve the quality, quantity, timing and distribution of water flow into Everglades National Park.
- Increasing the probability of restoration of Shark River Slough by working with the NPS Naples Lands Office whose job it is to acquire 109,000 acres of land in the Everglades expansion area.
- Continue working with Congress to receive sufficient construction funds to implement the Modified Water Deliveries to Shark River Slough project.

#### Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary

Everglades National Park continues to have a close working relationship with the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary (FKNMS). There is shared recognition of the mutual influences between park and sanctuary administration, including Florida Bay, associated water quality, the coral reef tract, operations and management. The park is a formal participant in the FKNMS' Water Quality Steering Committee. The FKNMS is an active partner in the ecosystem restoration effort. The two agencies continued their collaboration with the Environmental

Protection Agency in the production of "Water-ways". This half-hour television show airs widely in the region and explores the natural resources and environmental issues of South Florida.

The NPS and the FKNMS are continuing an inter-agency planning effort to protect sensitive Tortugas habitats. The NPS is developing a Dry Tortugas National Park General Management Plan amendment that will determine ways to enhance resource protection while continuing to provide high quality visitor experiences. The FKNMS' Tortugas 2000 effort will establish a marine ecological reserve to protect biodiversity and ecosystem integrity. In October and November 1998, the agencies combined their initial scoping efforts to show the difference between the similar, but distinct, plans in a forum that encouraged strong public participation. Interagency hearings were held to gather public comments on the draft plans in June and July 2000. Completion of the final plans is expected by December 31, 2000.

#### Coral Reef Protection

On June 11, 1998, the President signed Executive Order 13089 directing federal agencies to take actions to assist in protecting coral reefs, to fully consider the impacts of their actions on coral reefs, to further scientific research, including mapping and monitoring, and to undertake international initiatives for the same purposes. In October 1998, the first meeting of the Coral Reef Task Force established under the Order met at Biscayne National Park. Everglades actively participated and, through its administrative responsibilities for Dry Tortugas National Park, will continue to be active in implementing the terms of the Order. Utilizing existing relationships with the Bahamas National Trust and contacts with World Heritage Site managers, Everglades will also pursue implementation of the Order's provisions with respect to international cooperation.

#### Green Parks Initiative

Everglades National Park is working with the Department of Energy to develop projects in support of energy conservation and the "Green Parks" initiative. The objectives are to reduce pollution and the reliance on fossil fuels to generate electricity.



#### Local Public Schools

For the twenty-eighth year, the park worked with Miami-Dade, Broward, Monroe, and Collier and Lee County Public Schools to provide curriculum-based, on-site programs for 13,147 students. The annual "Envirothon", a scholastic competition in which teams of high school students test their knowledge of the Everglades and environmental issues, was jointly sponsored by the park and the school district.

#### International

Everglades National Park is addressing increasing levels of interest and demand for participation in cooperative professional activities with national park/protected area, tourism, scientific, and regional planning and development interests of other nations. The park's international significance under treaty and multinational agreements, and the unprecedented size, scope, and complexity of Everglades ecosystem restoration, have created global interest in its management issues.

Geographically and culturally, the park's location makes it part of Miami's position as a gateway to Latin America and the Caribbean. Biogeographically, its significance as a subtropical coastal wetland and marine estuary means that its mission encompasses a shared heritage with other

nations of the region, in terms of migratory avian and marine species, air and water quality, and impacts of tourism, immigration, and general development and stability of neighboring countries.

Everglades is the only property in the United States that has been formally recognized, under the three major designations, as having international significance. It is a World Heritage Site, a Wetland of International Importance, and a Biosphere Reserve. The park is managed according to U.S. law and jurisdiction, but the nation has voluntarily pledged to protect the site in perpetuity.

In 1999, the park provided professional orientation and learning programs to over 350 foreign park representatives, in areas ranging from park management and specific operations interests, to ecosystem planning, restoration, and management. Notable visits included foreign military officers from 47 nations attending training at the U.S. Army War College and the U.S. State Department's Foreign Service Institute Senior Seminar; both groups learning from Everglades' example for potential application to environmental issues in other parts of the world. In July, a park representative was selected to escort the Deputy Director of Argentina's National Park Service on an orientation visit to the United States.

#### World Heritage Managers' Council

In 1996, Everglades National Park hosted an initial meeting of the managers of U.S. World Heritage Sites. As a result, an NPS Council was formalized in order to better coordinate site management issues of common concern and to more effectively provide site management perspectives on the international program aspects of the World Heritage Convention. The Council has met three times and, among other projects, has produced a revised public information brochure on the World Heritage program.

In July, the park was represented at a regional workshop of World Heritage Site managers at Lake Baikal, Russia. The meeting led to formation of a similar managers' council within the Russian Federation.

#### Bahamas National Trust

Under the terms of the National Park Service/Bahamas National Trust Memorandum of Agreement, the park represented the Service at two meetings of the Trust Council and cooperated in additional exchange activities:

- Everglades identified three senior consultants (two retired NPS; one retired Parks Canada) who visited the Bahamas in December to develop a guideline and process for management planning at the Bahamas national parks. Following completion of their report, the consultants returned to the Bahamas and presented their recommendations to the Trust Council. Their report was unanimously adopted as a guideline for management planning at the Bahamian national parks.
- Everglades identified a 1974 wildland fire truck as surplus to U.S. Government needs and transferred the truck to the Trust to assist in providing fire management capability at the Rand Nature Center and the outlying Lucayan National Park.

#### Brazil

In October, 1997, the United States and Brazil, under the bilateral agreement "Common Agenda for the Environment", signed a joint declaration designating Everglades National Park and the Brazilian Pantanal National Park as "Partner Parks". The interior wetlands characteristics of both parks provide points of common interest and the opportunity to share techniques and approaches to resource conservation and park management.

Under USAID funding, Everglades and DOI representatives visited Brasilia in August 1999 for discussions with the Brazilian Government and Ecotopica to negotiate and outline the terms for a new round of cooperative activities. Based on the jointly prepared work plan, a budget proposal was submitted for a second phase program and is currently under review.



Achieving and/or exceeding the long-term goal performance targets is critically dependent on special project funds, donations, assistance, and partnerships. Everglades faces challenges associated with resource preservation, visitation, operations, and budgets. Many of these challenges could significantly affect the achievement of the goals in the Strategic Plan and in the Annual Performance Plans.



## Key External Factors

While park management and staff can plan, manage, and largely control much of what occurs in the park, other things they can only influence, especially things external to park boundaries. Some things, such as natural events, they have no control over whatsoever. A number of external factors that could positively or negatively affect goal outcomes were taken into consideration in developing this plan and its long-term goals. A few of the most important or most likely are identified below.

- **Population Growth and Development:** South Florida's population is expected to grow from 5 million to 12 million by 2050. Development and growth are transforming large tracts of wetlands, uplands and agricultural lands into congested urban areas at a rapid pace. Loss of wetlands and agricultural lands adjacent to the park can adversely affect park resources and values including its water supply, plants and animals.



- **Partnerships:** Many park programs are carried out through partnerships with other organizations at the Federal, State and local levels. Non-profit organizations also carry out important partnership initiatives with the park. Large-scale initiatives, such as our involvement in the South Florida ecosystem restoration initiative, involve many government agencies and non-governmental partners. Success in achieving park goals is dependent upon continued support and commitment from our partners, many of whom have differing missions and goals.
- **Political and Legislative factors:** Congressional and executive branch support are vital for achieving park long-term goals. Congressional and administrative oversight will continue with oversight hearings and field visits. If the costs of management and providing products and services rise at rates greater than appropriations, then adjustments of goals and plans may be necessary.
- **Demographics:** Population growth may result in a significant increase in recreational visitors to the park. Changing demographics of park visitors and the general public can challenge the National Park Service to find and implement new and relevant means of providing interpretative, educational and other services. It can also impact our ability to attract and maintain a talented, diverse workforce.
- **Natural Processes and Disasters:** Natural events, such as hurricanes, droughts, floods and fire can dramatically change the conditions at the park and can have a significant effect in the timing of goals.

## **Measuring Results**

### **Program Evaluation Methodology**

During 1996, the management team at Everglades National Park began GPRA implementation through joint planning with staff of Biscayne and Dry Tortugas National Parks and the Big Cypress National Preserve. This effort resulted in completion of a South Florida National Parks Coordinated Management Framework that includes purpose, significance and mission goal statements for each of the four South Florida parks. It also includes the collective purpose, significance and mission goals of the National Park System units within the South Florida ecosystem. This document was circulated for review and comment by stakeholders in South Florida.

In 1997, park staff struggled with GPRA planning and produced the first set of park long-term goals and an Annual Performance Plan (APP). The analysis of human, fiscal and other resources needed to reach the goals was conducted during preparation of the first and subsequent APPs. In 1999 and 2000 the management team conducted a situation analysis to identify organizational strengths and weaknesses and external opportunities and threats. The objective of this analysis was to examine the park's organization and environment to understand where we stand now, and to identify issues that can affect our ability to achieve the park's mission and goals. Elements of this analysis are included in this document and will be incorporated into the park's Annual Performance Plan. A working draft of the Strategic Plan was prepared in the spring of 2000. The final plan will be submitted to the Southeast Regional Office in August 2000.

### **Schedule for Future Evaluations**

The park has scheduled quarterly and annual program reviews to measure progress toward annual goals. This analysis will be documented in the preparation of an Annual Performance Report each year.

The park Strategic Plan will be reviewed annually and potential adjustments will be made based on annual performance achievement in the prior years. Upon completion of the Everglades National Park General Management Plan in 2003, it is our intention to revise the park Strategic Plan to align it with the broad goals and strategies included in the GMP.

## **Consultation**

GPRA requires that Congress, OMB, and other interested and affected parties be consulted in the development of Strategic Plans. Congress and OMB, as well as the Department of the Interior, were extensively consulted in the development of the NPS servicewide plan.

In the development of the Everglades Strategic Plan, the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Working Group, the Governor's Commission for a Sustainable South Florida and stakeholders were consulted during the development of the South Florida National Parks Coordinated Management Framework in 1997.

In October 2000, the park will begin a revision of its 1979 Master Plan to produce a new General Management Plan (GMP). This effort will include extensive public involvement in the

process of developing goals and strategies and that will guide protection and management of the park for the next 15 – 20 years. Upon completion of the GMP (anticipated in FY 2003), the park will revise its Strategic Plan to align its 5-year goals and strategies with those of the new GMP. It is our intention to consult with interested parties and stakeholders during the next revision of the Strategic Plan.

## Contributors

The following park staff members contributed to the preparation of this plan:

Dick Ring	Superintendent
Larry Belli	Deputy Superintendent
Walter Chavez	Chief of Administration
Rick Cook	Public Affairs Officer
Brien Culhane	Chief, Ecosystem Planning and Compliance
Bill Fay	Concessions Management Specialist
Elaine Hall	Chief, Legal and Legislative Affairs
Steve Hurd	Safety Officer
Mike Jester	Acting Chief, Maintenance and Facilities Management
Robert Johnson	Director, South Florida Natural Resources Center
Deb Nordeen	Assistant Public Affairs Officer
Phil Selleck	Acting Chief, Resources and Visitor Protection
Candace Tinkler	Acting Chief, Interpretation and Visitor Services

And, all park staff.

